EPRC
ECONOMIC POLICY RESEARCH CENTRE

30 YEARS ANNIVERSARY

Towards Sustainable Development

ANNUAL REPORT

July 2023 - June 2024

www.eprcug.org

Who We Are

The Economic Policy Research Centre (EPRC) is Uganda's leading think tank in economic research and development policy. We provide policy analysis to support the formulation, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of government policies. EPRC has also broadened its scope and repositioned itself to respond to emerging development issues beyond Uganda through evidence based research.

Mandate and Role

EPRC is an autonomous not-for-profit organisation limited by guarantee. The Centre was established in 1993 to fill the void in economics research, policy analysis, and capacity building for effective in-country contributions to Uganda's policy formulation process.

Since its inception, EPRC has grown into a credible and reputable policy think tank. It prides in a high quality evidence based research, strong policy engagement with government MDAs and convening power to bring together a diversity of stakeholders to deliberate on topical development issues affecting Uganda's development.

EPRC's mandate is to develop and implement a responsive research agenda that facilitates the achievement of the long-term goals of Government of Uganda, as well as the expectations of development partners, among others.

Organizational Values

The conduct of EPRC's business is anchored on the following core values:

E — Excellence: We are dedicated to excellence in everything we do through attention to detail, quality assurance, timeliness and commitment.

I — Independence: We believe in the independence of mind in the conduct of research and other obligations of the Centre as stipulated in our mandate.

S — Sensitivity: We endeavor to continually understand and respond to the legitimate interests and concerns of our stakeholders as the basis for maintaining mutually beneficial and respectable relations.

E — Efficiency: We avoid resource wastage in doing our work. We focus on achieving maximum desired results, with minimal resource input.

R — Respect: We believe everyone at EPRC matters. We recognize diversity and respect one another, value divergent opinions and ideals, and empower each other to voice their views as part of our work ethic.

I — Integrity: We are honest, open and adhere to moral and ethical principles as we serve the needs of our stakeholders. We are cognizant of the consequences of our actions and decisions.

E — Engagement: We pay attention to constructive engagements, partnerships and collaboration while maintaining individual accountability.

Vision

A Centre of Excellence for evidence-based economic policy research.

Mission

To foster evidence generation and uptake for sustainable economic growth and development for Uganda and the region.

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Board of Directors Statement

Mr. Ramathan Ggoobi
Chairman, Board of Directors

Dear stakeholders,

It has become increasingly evident that we must urgently address the challenges impeding our country's full transformation. The Government of Uganda (GOU) recognizes the critical role of generating and using evidence to effectively confront these challenges.

I extend my gratitude to the GOU for increasing funding to the EPRC, enabling the Centre to conduct research that aligns with the nation's aspirations. In FY2023/24, the Centre received UGX 8.425 billion in core funding from the Government. This strengthened domestic support and significantly reduced our reliance on isolated and unreliable research projects.

In addition to this, the Centre successfully attracted further funding, allowing us to realize several strategic objectives. I would like to recognise and appreciate the financial contributions from international agencies such as the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), World Bank, USAID, and UN agencies. I also acknowledge the financial and technical support from international foundations, universities, and other government ministries, departments, and agencies. While this funding may not fully cover the Centre's needs, the progress made in resource mobilisation is a positive step toward sustainably financing our work.

In terms of research, the Centre conducted extensive studies under the theme "*Accelerating Sustainable and Productive Employment for Inclusive Economic Growth in Uganda.*" We also undertook targeted research requested by the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development and other government agencies. As outlined in this annual report, several studies were completed, while others are progressing well and expected to be finalized by the first quarter of FY2024/25.

I am pleased to report that during FY2023/24, the Centre led national discussions on key issues such as climate change, which was the focus of the Agriculture Finance Yearbook 2022, launched in September 2023. Our research

on the sugarcane sub-sector also spurred policy, public, and media debate on how to make the sector more sustainable and beneficial to all stakeholders. Additionally, EPRC is working closely with the Cabinet Secretariat to develop the Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) for the sugarcane sub-sector, which I believe will be instrumental in streamlining policies and regulations in this area.

Throughout FY2023/24, the Board of Directors diligently fulfilled their responsibilities in line with the EPRC Board Governance Manual. I pledge that the Board will continue providing the necessary oversight to ensure the Centre meets the expectations of its stakeholders.

Finally, I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to everyone who joined us in celebrating 30 years of evidence generation in Uganda. The anniversary events, including a medical camp, public talks, dialogues, and the grand dinner on March 21, 2024, reaffirmed EPRC's role as a leading think tank in the country.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, EPRC Management, and staff, we deeply appreciate the trust you have placed in us and encourage your continued support in the future.

Thank you.

GOU recognizes the critical role of generating and **using evidence to effectively confront these challenge**

In FY2023/24, the Centre received UGX **8.425 billion** in core funding from the Government

Recognize and appreciate the financial contributions from international agencies such as the **IDRC**, **World Bank**, **USAID**, and **UN** agencies

Executive Director's Message

Dr. Sarah N. Ssewanyana
Executive Director

Dear Stakeholders,

I am pleased to present to you our annual report for the financial year 2023/24. This year has been particularly significant for the Centre as we celebrated 30 years of impactful research and policy influence in Uganda. Our anniversary events were not only a reflection of EPRC's influence but also our contribution to the community and country, while recognizing the partnerships that have supported us along the way.

As part of these celebrations, we held a series of events, including an open day featuring a two-day medical camp, a career guidance session for students, and a public talk. The medical camp, organized in collaboration with Makerere University Hospital, provided free medical services to over 700 attendees from the university and surrounding communities.

To strengthen collaboration between EPRC and academia, we hosted a public talk on *How Think Tanks and Academia Can Collaborate to Influence Policy*, with a keynote address by Makerere University Vice Chancellor, Prof. Barnabas Nawangwe. Additionally, leveraging our convening power, we brought together think tanks from across the continent for a public dialogue to explore the role think tanks can play in shaping the policy agenda at the G20. Over 200 participants joined online, with panellists from across the continent contributing to a rich and diverse discussion.

Our grand event, held on March 21, 2024, was a celebratory dinner attended by dignitaries and key stakeholders, with the United Nations Uganda Country Representative, Ms. Susan Ngongi Namondo, as the chief guest. These events offered us a chance to reflect on our journey, appreciate the trust that Ugandans and the government have placed in us, and renew our commitment to building a better future for our country.

Research generation and uptake

The research theme for the year, approved by the Board during its 82nd sitting, was ***Accelerating Sustainable and Productive Employment for Inclusive Economic Growth in Uganda.*** This theme ensured that the Centre's research aligned with the country's long-term aspirations. During FY2023/24, the Centre undertook five background papers covering key areas such as digitalization, domestic resource mobilization, the budget-growth-job creation nexus, and skills for employment and markets. Progress on these projects has been steady, although they are at varying stages of completion.

We also concluded our three-year project under the IDRC-COVID-19: Responses for Equity (CORE) Initiative, which examined the impact of COVID-19 on Micro, Small, and Medium-sized Enterprises (MSMEs). The findings informed the creation of the Small Businesses Recovery Fund (SBRF) and provided timely data on government interventions during and after the pandemic. Additionally, we developed a resilience index to help businesses withstand future shocks and support government response efforts.

Our analysis of the agricultural sector budget for FY2023/24 revealed that no funds had been allocated to the extension services program. Following high-level engagement with the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries, the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, civil society organizations, and the media, a supplementary budget of UGX 30 billion was approved for extension services.

We also led policy discussions on the sugarcane sub-sector and its impact on food security in cane-growing areas. As a result, the MoFPED tasked us with developing the Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) for the sub-sector, which helped inform the Trade Committee of Parliament's decisions on the Sugar [Amendment] Bill 2023. We aim to complete the RIA during the first half of FY2024/25.

Convening Power

The Centre continued to use its convening power to organize and lead important discussions on development issues in Uganda. With support from the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), we completed a study on environmentally responsive public debt and sustainability, contributing to the national conversation on managing Uganda's growing public debt in a way that takes climate change and environmental concerns into account.

At our flagship Annual Forum on Agriculture and Food Security, we addressed food insecurity and the sugarcane issue in Buganda, Busoga, and Bunyoro. The event was graced by the Minister of State for Planning, Hon. Amos Lugoloobi, and Mr Cabrel Nana, FAO Policy Analyst, who delivered the keynote address on behalf of the FAO Country Representative.

Our other flagship knowledge product, the Agriculture Financial Yearbook 2022, was launched with participation from development agencies, UN bodies, and civil society organizations. The launch featured key speeches from the Permanent Secretary and Secretary to the Treasury, Mr. Ramathan Ggoobi, and the Deputy Governor of the Bank of Uganda, Dr. Michael Atingi-Ego. The 2022 edition emphasized climate-responsive agricultural finance, further highlighting the Centre's commitment to addressing climate change issues that affect various aspects of socio-economic development.

Partnerships and Resource Mobilization

To ensure the Centre's continued ability to produce relevant and impactful research, we have invested in building and maintaining strategic partnerships for resource mobilization. We maintained strong partnerships with the World Bank, UN Women, the Belgian Development Agency (Enabel), the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), the INCLUDE Knowledge Platform, and the African Center for Economic Transformation (ACET) Ghana. The support from these partnerships enabled us to explore areas we wouldn't have been able to reach on our own. We are also deeply grateful to the Government of Uganda for doubling the Centre's annual grant in FY2023/24.

Tribute

As I conclude this message, I wish to pay tribute to two esteemed members of the EPRC family who passed away this year: our former Board Chairperson, Mr. Keith Muhakanizi, and former Board Member, Prof. Justin Opio-Epelu. May their souls rest in eternal peace.

I invite you to read this report, and I thank you for your continued support of EPRC.

Board of Management

Ex- Officio Members

Mr. Ramathan Ggoobi
Permanent Secretary/ Secretary to Treasury, Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development (Chairperson)

Prof. Henry Alinaitwe
Ag. Deputy Vice Chancellor for Finance & Administration, Makerere University
(Vice Chairperson)

Dr. Jacob Opolot
Executive Director of Operations, Bank of Uganda (Delegated Representative of Governor, BOU)

Dr. Sarah N Ssewanyana
Executive Director, Economic Policy Research Centre

Non- Ex- Officio Members

Mr. Arthur Isiko
Managing Director, Bank of Africa (Independent Member)

Prof. William Bazeyo
Africa One Health University Network (Independent Member)

Prof. Stephen K. Nkundabanyanga
Head of Accounting Department, Makerere University Business School
(Public Sector Representative)
Non- ex-officio member

Dr. Fred P. Ssengooba
Professor, School of Public Health, Makerere University
(Research Community Representative)

Dr. Asuman Guloba
Director of Development Planning, National Planning Authority
(Public Sector Representative)

Ms. Judith Namugenyi
General Manager Internal Audit & Forensics, MTN Uganda
(Private Sector Representative)

Research Staff

Dr. Sarah N. Ssewanyana
Executive Director

Dr. Ibrahim Kasirye
Director Research
Head Research Function

MACROECONOMICS

Mr. Paul Corti Lakuma
Senior Research Fellow

Dr. Brian Sserunjogi
Research Fellow III

Dr. Emmanuel Erem
Research Fellow

Ms. Rehema Kahunde
Research Analyst

Mr. Joab Wamani
Volunteer Research Associate

SECTORAL

Dr. Swaibu Mbowa
Senior Research Fellow

Ms. Florence Nakazi
Research Fellow

Dr Christine Arwata Alum
Volunteer Research Associate

Sheila Nakkazi
Volunteer Research Associate

Solomon S. Nuwagaba
Volunteer Research Associate

Ms. Mary Kajumba
Volunteer Research Associate

Research Staff

TRADE AND REGIONAL INTEGRATION

Dr. Isaac Shinyekwa
Senior Research Fellow

Ms. Aida Nattabi Kibirige
Research Analyst

Ms. Justine Luwedde
Research Analyst

Dr. Amos Sanday
Volunteer Research Associate

Mr. Philemon Okillong
Volunteer Research Associate

Ms. Hildah Namuleme
Young Professional

MICROECONOMICS

Dr. Madina Guloba
Senior Research Fellow

Dr. Linda Nakato
Research Fellow

Mr. Medard Kit Kakuru
Research Analyst

Ms. Blessing Atwine
Research Analyst

Mr. Regean Mugume
Research Analyst

Mr. Smartson Ainomugisha
Volunteer Research Associate

Pauline Nakitende
Volunteer Research Associate

Dr. Phionah Namulira
Volunteer Research Associate

Jude Ssebuliba
Young Professional

Administrative and Support Staff

FINANCE

Ms. Mary Tusaba Kivunike
Director Finance & Shared Services

Mr. Denis Arop Nono
Accountant

Ms. Vanice Nuwagaba
Procurement Officer

Ms. Betty Kuteesa Nalule
Senior Accountant

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT & DISSEMINATION

Ms. Elizabeth Birabwa A.
Programmes Manager

Mr. Alon Mwesigwa
Communication Officer

Mr. Damson Atwesigye
Knowledge Management Officer

Mr. Joshua Mwesigwa M.
Knowledge Management Associate

Mr. Amos Musoke
ICT Officer

Mr. Andrew Peters Okello
ICT Assistant

HUMAN RESOURCE AND ADMINISTRATION

Ms. Fatumah Namubiru
Human Resource & Administration Manager

Ms. Claire Biira Bahati
Administrative Officer

Ms. Aminah Balunywa
Front Desk Officer

Mr. Sam Lakwonyera
Transport Officer

Mr. Deo Barugahare
Transport Officer

Ms. Caroline Nyakaisiki
Executive Assistant

Mr. Godson Busengendo
Transport Officer

Mr. Tonny Stephen M.
Transport Officer

Mr. Robert Muzaaya
Office Attendant

Mr. Lawrence Luzze
Office Attendant

Ms. Joan Nampindi
Office Attendant

GROW Unpaid Care Work Project Consortium members engage with a woman in the intervention area of Mpig

01 Provision of Responsive Evidence-Based Research

In line with its strategic pillar of delivering responsive, evidence-based research through proactive stakeholder engagement, the Centre's research during the FY 2023/2024 focused on analyzing the economic impacts of the Russia-Ukraine war and the COVID-19 pandemic on Ugandan businesses, the economy, and society. It also aimed at identifying measures to stimulate the economy and employment to avert further economic decline. The research theme for the year was ***"Accelerating Sustainable and Productive Employment for Inclusive Economic Growth in Uganda."*** This section outlines the progress of research activities carried out from July 1, 2023, to June 30, 2024, across three key performance areas.

1.1. New Evidence Generated to inform and influence policy and practices.

The research conducted in this area was initiated by EPRC researchers, either independently or in collaboration with strategic partners, to generate new evidence aimed at informing and influencing policy. This included primary surveys and contributions to the Centre's flagship publications, such as The Ugandan Economy Today, Business Climate Index, and Agriculture Finance Yearbook. Highlights of the completed studies during the review period are outlined below.

Mitigating the socio-economic impacts of COVID-19 and promoting post-pandemic resilience in Uganda project.

The project, part of the COVID-19 Responses for Equity (CORE) Initiative, was a three-year effort set to conclude in January 2024 but extended to February 2024 for further community engagement in Mbale and Fort Portal. It assessed the effectiveness of government interventions for Micro, Small, and Medium-sized Enterprises (MSMEs), contributed to designing the Small Business Recovery Fund, and identified improvements needed for business resilience. During the review period, the project produced one research report, and two policy briefs, conducted capacity strengthening for policymakers, and held one national and two regional dissemination events.

From Promises to Actions: Shifting Gender Norms and Public Perceptions about Unpaid Care Work in Workplaces and Families in Uganda.

Launched in April 2021, this project, conducted in partnership with Makerere University School of Women and Gender Studies and Care International Uganda, aims to assess the scalability of the POWER (Promoting Women's Economic Empowerment, Organizing Men to Challenge Inequities, Working with Communities, Engaging Local-Level Duty-Bearers, and Reaching Out to Decision-Makers through Advocacy) model in changing gender and social norms (GSNs) and public perceptions of Unpaid Care Work (UCW) in Uganda. The project focuses on (1) mapping GSNs and perceptions of UCW across family, community, and institutional levels to design targeted interventions for reducing women's care burden; (2) evaluating the effectiveness and adaptability of the POWER model and identifying necessary modifications; and (3) guiding policy and community actions to address and scale up solutions for adverse social and gender norms related to UCW. Implemented as a Randomized Control Trial (RCT) in Pallisa, Masindi, Mpigi, and Mbarara districts, the project completed two monitoring visits, endline surveys. The POWER intervention yielded positive outcomes, with a reduction in women's time spent in UCW and an increase in men's involvement in UCW in the intervention parishes. Specifically, women's time in UCW activities fell by at least one and a half hours compared to areas where nothing was done. Also, women's time spent on paid activities went up by 35 minutes in intervention areas. Conversely, men in areas with

A woman cares for her children in Mpigi District. The burden of care work disproportionately falls on women

the full POWER model increased their time spent on paid activities by 17 minutes. The POWER interventions also led to a decreased perception among men of care and domestic work being a women's role only.

Digitally Enabled Resilience and Nutrition Policy Innovations (DEPRIN)

The project aimed to support government and private sector actors, including smallholder farmers, in designing and implementing gender-responsive and resilient food system policies and programs. In collaboration with AKADEMIYA 2063, the project leverages its expertise, tools, and resources to build a flexible digital platform that enhances the technical skills of food system actors and fosters adaptive policy solutions in the participating countries. During the review period, fieldwork focused on large-scale maize and cassava farmers in Kasanda, Mubende, Kiboga, Kole, Oyam, and Lira districts.

Sugarcane Production and Food Security in Uganda

Published in September 2023, the

paper examines food insecurity in the sugarcane-growing areas of Busoga, Buganda, and Bunyoro. It found that households engaged in sugarcane farming in 2021 experienced less food insecurity and had more months of food adequacy compared to non-cane-growing households. The paper reignited discussions on the balance between food security and sugarcane

farming, recommending that extension services should promote sugarcane growing on larger farms (eight acres or more) and that farmers maintain food crop cultivation and adopt productivity-enhancing technologies.

Monitoring Uganda's Business Climate

EPRC continued to track and analyse Ugandan business managers' perceptions of current and expected business conditions over the next three months to gauge their impact on economic developments and the business environment. The findings were published quarterly in the Business Climate Indexes, which provided valuable insights to policymakers in both government and the private sector about economic trends and future business expectations. During the reporting period, four quarterly bulletins were released. It was also decided to refresh the business sample, and increase its size, starting in FY2024/25.

Agricultural Finance Yearbook 2022

The 12th edition of the annual Agriculture Finance Yearbook provided a comprehensive analysis of agricultural financing in Uganda, focusing on the theme: *"Towards Climate-Responsive Agricultural Finance in Uganda."* It explored green financing and related issues, such as advancing risk mitigation policies, attracting global climate funding, and leveraging fintechs and agri-techs as cost-effective tools for green financing. The report emphasized the benefits of integrating environmental, social, and governance (ESG) policies and 'do no harm' principles in economic activities. It recommended that the government fulfil its commitments to public-private partnerships and prioritise investment in value chain-specific inputs. All editions since 2014 are available for free download in PDF format from www.eprcug.org.

Smallholder farmers in Kasese district watering their crops

1.2. Knowledge Synthesis to Respond to the Priority Needs of Stakeholders.

The research conducted in this category was commissioned and funded by specific clients, aligning with the Centre's research agenda and strategic plan priorities. During the financial year 2023/24, the Centre's Directorate of Research continued to receive requests for new studies from various government Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs), development partners, and non-state actors. Most of these requests focused on addressing unemployment in Uganda, particularly among the youth. A brief overview of these studies is provided below.

Digital Transformation and the Creation of Descent and Productive Jobs in Uganda

Uganda not only grapples with unemployment but also struggles with the availability of decent and productive jobs for those who are employed. The country is undergoing significant transformation, increasingly relying on digital technologies that are reshaping how services, including finance, are accessed. The study looks at whether digital transformation facilitates the creation of decent and productive jobs in Uganda based on occupational data from the National Labour Force Survey. The results reveal Uganda has experienced a considerable yet varied transformation of occupations across all the sectors largely because of differences in digital technologies diffusion in different jobs. Specifically, the digitalisation of jobs is the lowest in mining and quarrying and highest in the services sector. The results also show that digital transformation improves productivity and quality of existing jobs across all sectors. However, the new jobs created are neither decent nor productive and largely in the informal sector. Addressing these challenges can foster a more inclusive and productive digital economy for sustainable employment in Uganda.

Tripple Wins: Budget, Growth, and Jobs

The Government of Uganda has prioritized six critical sectors for growth, investing substantial resources into them. The EPRC initiated a study to evaluate the rationale behind the selection of these sectors and to assess the anticipated growth and job creation relative to the investments made. The study also aimed to gain insights into how productive employment can be generated within these sectors with a focus on inclusive economic growth. The results revealed demographic changes presented the biggest opportunity to raise GDP per capita and thus reduce poverty. Second, output per worker (productivity) is another window of opportunity for increasing GDP per capita. A caveat here is that productivity should increase for large sectors (within sector contributions), and workers should relocate from below-average to above-average productivity sectors (inter-sectoral shift). As such, there is a need to increase investment in the sectors of agriculture, trade, and manufacturing—as these are the employment creators often experiencing labour movement into them. To complement investments in the priority sectors of agriculture, trade, and manufacturing, there is also a need to invest in education and *"human health and social work activities"* to develop a productive and sustainable workforce for the economy.

Enhancing Skills Acquisition for Productive Jobs

Women tailoring clothes inside the Nytil factory in Jinja

The persistent mismatch between the skills required in Uganda's job market and those acquired has been widely discussed, yet the country's youth still face high rates of unemployment and underemployment due to a lack of relevant skills. Vocational and entrepreneurship programs aimed at improving skills have so far delivered unsatisfactory results. This study investigated the challenges and opportunities related to skills acquisition in Uganda and explored how to better align education and training with labour market needs. Key findings revealed that the most in-demand skills were digital, and analytical/technical; these are essential for navigating the evolving job market. The digital divide and inadequate educational infrastructure stand in the way of people gaining these skills. There are significant disparities between education, qualifications, and job requirements, leading to underutilised skills and reduced productivity.

Boosting Local Government Revenue Mobilisation in Uganda in Collaboration with UNICEF

This study investigated how local revenue can enhance social service delivery under decentralization. It involved analyzing revenue collection gaps, reviewing relevant documents, assessing local government revenue administration qualitatively, and gathering insights from key informants and focus groups. The study resulted in a report with recommendations aimed at assisting struggling local governments in improving their local revenue generation.

The Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) on the Sugarcane Sub-sector

Following the 2022 study on *"Revisiting Policy and Institutional Arrangements Affecting Sugarcane Outgrowers and Millers in Uganda,"* the MoFPED formally requested the Centre to conduct a Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) on the sugarcane sub-sector. The RIA, primarily funded by an EPRC grant from the Government of Uganda and facilitated by the Cabinet Secretariat, had completed nine of the 14 RIA steps by May 31, 2024. Preliminary findings from the RIA informed the Sugar (Amendment) Bill 2023. The Centre presented its insights to the Parliamentary Committee on Tourism, Trade, and Industry on January 17, 2024, and provided additional information as requested. A progress report was also delivered to the Directorate of Economic Affairs on February 12, 2024. Further engagements are ongoing, with the final RIA report anticipated in the latter half of FY 2024/25.

Agriculture Linkages to the Oil and Gas Sector in Uganda

As Uganda approaches its first oil production, the Third National Development Plan (NDP III) and the Fourth National Development Plan (NDP IV) highlight oil & gas and agriculture as critical sectors for economic transformation. Recognizing the significant potential for agriculture to benefit from the oil and gas sector, the Centre, with support from the Petroleum Authority of Uganda (PAU), conducted a study to explore sectoral linkages between oil & gas and agriculture in two oil-rich regions. The study comprised four steps: (i) identifying potential linkages between the two sectors; (ii) cataloguing and evaluating current support interventions; (iii) assessing the effectiveness of these initiatives in enhancing food supply; and (iv) estimating the mutual impacts of both sectors on the national economy. The study was completed during the review period, and its findings were presented at the Annual Oil and Gas Conference in Munyonyo, Kampala.

A poultry farm in Hoima district. Photo/EPRC

1.3. Impact Evaluations of Government Programmes Conducted

The Assessment of Small Business Recovery Fund

The government established the Small Business Recovery Fund, valued at UGX 200 billion, to support small businesses in recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic. This fund was jointly financed by the government and Participating Financial Institutions (PFIs). However, by June 2023, only 10% of the fund had been disbursed. In response to this, the MoFPED requested the EPRC to investigate the reasons for the low uptake of the fund. The study, completed during the review period, identifies barriers to access and proposes improvements for future funds. It offered insights into effective and ineffective aspects of the fund's implementation and suggested recommendations for refining the fund's accessibility and design. The study's findings influenced the budgeting process, as highlighted in the budget speech by the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, Hon. Matia Kasaijja, in June 2024.

Assessment of the FY 2023/24 Agro-Industrialisation Programme Budget Towards the Provision of Agricultural Extension in Uganda.

Uganda's Agro-Industrialisation (AGI) programme, designed to bolster smallholder agriculture, is a key component of the Medium-Term Expenditure Framework (FY2023/24-FY2027/28). The programme aims to enhance input access through e-vouchers, improve agricultural extension services, and promote sustainable land management. Despite these goals, the budget for agricultural activities is insufficient, with decreasing funds for extension services. This study reviewed the AGI programme's budget estimates for FY 2023/24, pinpointed funding gaps, and proposed strategies for reallocating resources to improve extension services. The findings were shared at a public dialogue involving senior government officials and international organisations. As a result, the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development (MoFPED) allocated UGX 33 billion as a supplementary budget to support agricultural extension at the local government level.

An Assessment of the Implementation of the PDM at the Parish Level

In one of the first attempts to evaluate or assess the performance of wealth creation funds, the Centre started with an assessment of the government's Parish Development Model (PDM) initiative that seeks to improve the livelihoods of 3.5 million households in Uganda by promoting enterprise development and

President Yoweri Museveni officially launches the Parish Development Model (PDM)

financial inclusion. In the year under review, the Centre was able to develop survey instruments to be administered to (i) parish chiefs, (ii) enterprise groups/SACCOs, and (iii) beneficiary households, draw fieldwork plan and budget; also, two presentations of; preliminary findings and fieldwork plan were presented to the Directorate of Economic Affairs (DEA) of the MoFPED in March 2024. A follow-up meeting was held to address issues of representation. The study completion is expected in the year 2024/25.

1.4. Global Policy Questions Relevant to Uganda Studied

The Centre's research has addressed not only national but also global issues and policy questions pertinent to Uganda. During the year under review, the Centre engaged in collaborative research with international agencies, think tanks, and universities. Several multi-country studies were conducted, as detailed below:

Youth, Employment and Skills (YES) Pan-African Coalition for Transformation (PACT) Phase II.

YES-PACT facilitates collaboration among governments, local policymakers, the private sector, and civil society to develop and implement innovative economic transformation policies. Now in its second phase, YES-PACT has focused on evaluating the experiences of in-service teachers with the revised lower secondary school curriculum and identifying their retooling needs for effective implementation. During the year under review, YES-PACT conducted stakeholder mapping and a mini-survey on teachers' experiences with the revised lower secondary school curriculum. A draft policy note was completed, with policy engagement planned for the first quarter of FY2024/25.

YES-PACT champions pose for a photo after an evaluation meeting at EPRC offices, Makerere University

INFORMAS II - Measuring Progress Towards More Sustainable and Healthy Food Systems in Collaboration with the African Population and Health Research Centre (APHRC)

This research project, completed during the year under review, focused on enhancing food system policies in Uganda. It identified and evaluated critical policies for public sector actors using a new index of good practice indicators. The study mapped evidence of policy implementation and adaptation at municipal and national levels and examined the factors that either facilitate or obstruct policy change within the food system.

Building TVET Systems for Economic Transformation in Uganda

Conducted in collaboration with ACET Ghana, this study aims to evaluate the role and impact of TVET institutions in providing workers with skills relevant to the job market. The goal is to generate valuable information to inform policy on strengthening TVET institutions and equipping learners with skills necessary for the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR). During the year under review, an inception report was developed, and secondary data analysis was completed.

Identification of Market Access Opportunities Under the AfCFTA Agreement for Uganda

The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) provides African countries with opportunities for expanded markets. However, a country's success depends on its readiness, and ability to identify competitive sectors and select the best products and markets for export. This study aimed to assist Uganda in maximizing benefits from the AfCFTA agreement by identifying optimal products, sectors, and markets for its exports within Africa. It analyzed market access conditions, pinpointed the most promising export commodities and destinations for Uganda, and estimated the potential job creation if Uganda fully leveraged its export opportunities within the AfCFTA area. The study found that the EAC and COMESA are the leading destinations of Uganda's exports, accounting for about 35 and 46 percent respectively of the market share. The top products identified include coffee, cement, sugar, tea, maize, palm oil, milk and cream, and iron and steel products, among others. Exploiting the unrealised export potential under the AfCFTA will generate 217,068 direct jobs and 438,461 indirect jobs.

Leveraging the AfCFTA Agreement for Economic Growth and Job Creation: Challenges and Possible Solutions

The study examines the supportive policies and actions needed from both the Ugandan government and the private sector to address challenges and risks in fully capitalizing on the continental market. Key areas of focus include quality standards, non-tariff barriers (NTBs), logistics, infrastructure, trade facilitation, and import surges. It evaluates how these factors impact Uganda's export potential under the AfCFTA and proposes effective strategies for market penetration. The results show the GDP growth, and increase in population significantly influenced that Uganda's exports. The state of logistics and transport infrastructure, including ports, railways, and logistics services such as warehouses, distribution centres, and customs, plays a significant role in determining the level of exports. Distance plays a major role in trade between Uganda and her African partners, with greater distances leading to lower trade flows. To increase market access for Uganda and State Parties, the continent should improve transport networks and connectivity.

Goods in transit at one of the border points in Uganda. The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) is expected to ease trade among African nations

UN Women Uganda Country Representative on a courtesy visit to EPRC

02 Building, Strengthening and Nurturing Strategic Partnerships to Drive Evidence-informed Development

Under this strategic pillar, the Centre aims to nurture and strengthen strategic research to policy partnerships that are effective to maximise the impact of research for development. This involves fostering relationships and collaborations with the stakeholders that are most likely to use or benefit from the research generated by the centre. These include but are not limited to donors, researchers, academia, civil society, media, government and other stakeholders. This strategic pillar is realised through three performance areas: public dialogues, research dissemination, and technical and advisory support.

2.1. Improved coordination and collaboration with stakeholders involved in evidence-informed policy development and policy discourse

Throughout the year under review, our commitment to fostering a collaborative partnership environment was evident through numerous events organised to facilitate knowledge sharing and policy discourse among stakeholders. A detailed listing of the events is attached as Annexe 1. The most notable research dissemination and policy engagement events are presented under the following categories:

Public Dialogues

Ministry of Education and Sports Assistant Commissioner Alfred Kyaka participates in one of the dialogues hosted at EPRC

Post Budget Dialogue on Declining Share of Budget Allocation to Agriculture Extension Services

A post-budget public dialogue to discuss the declining share of the national budget allocation to local governments for the provision of agricultural extension services was held on July 13, 2023. It attracted a wide array of stakeholders drawn from central and local government, private sector, development partners, civil society and the media concerned about the decrease of Central Government transfers to LG programmes from UGX 356 billion in FY 2021/22 to only 141 billion in FY 2023/24. This was partly attributed to poor absorption capacities, human capacity gaps and corruption at the LG level. The speakers and participants made several proposals to the government to facilitate the provision of agricultural extension work at the LG level. The most pronounced were the full-scale implementation of PDM especially pillar 1 on production, storage, processing and marketing that warrants input from extension workers, addressing the absorption capacity gaps in local governments and allocation of non-wage budgeting for extension services.

11th Annual National Forum on Agriculture and Food Security

On September 26, 2023, the Centre hosted the 11th National Forum on Agriculture and Food Security to deliberate on the impacts of sugarcane growing on food security outcomes in Uganda and pick experiences and lessons from practitioners at the local governments on the sugarcane food security nexus. The discussion was based on findings of a study titled *'Sugarcane production and food security in Uganda'*, conducted collaboratively with Michigan State University (MSU) and the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) under the auspices of the Food Security Policy Research, Capacity, and Influence (PRCI) project. The forum was officiated by the State Minister for Planning Hon. Amos Lugolobi, while a representative of the FAO Country Head, Mr. Nana Gabriel delivered the keynote address. Both observed that inadequate regulation of the sugarcane sub-sector had led to power imbalance among players involved and emphasised the need for total stakeholder involvement and commitment towards unlocking the sugarcane-food security paradox in the sugarcane growing regions. The participants likewise emphasised the concept of "cooperative competition"

advocating for collaboration between sugar industries, enterprises, and private entrepreneurs to address the food security challenges associated with sugarcane production. The forum generated proposals that fed into the ongoing Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) of the Uganda Sugar sub-sector.

Policy Dialogue on "Positioning Think Tanks to Support the African Union Agenda at the G20"

As part of the activities to celebrate 30 years of impactful research in Uganda, the EPRC, in collaboration with the African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF), in Zimbabwe, organised a public dialogue to discuss the role of thinktanks in driving evidence-based policy formulation and implementation at the G20. The discussions had panellists from think tanks across Africa – South Africa, Ghana, Zimbabwe, and Nigeria. It was attended by more than 200 participants from research organisations, academia, government, development partners, multilateral, policymakers, trade blocks, and CSOs in Africa; the event exemplified the vibrancy of the intellectual community and the commitment to advancing Africa's development agenda.

EPRC at 30 Talk on Think Tanks and Academia Collaboration to Influence Policy

On February 15, 2024, as part of its activities to mark 30 years of existence, the Centre hosted a talk on how think tanks and academia can work collaboratively to influence evidence-based public policy. The intention was to raise awareness of the work undertaken by EPRC among the Makerere University community and to explore ways of strengthening the relationship between the two institutions. The event was graced by the Vice Chancellor, Makerere University Prof Barnabas Nawangwe who delivered the keynote address. It was also attended by EPRC board members led by the PSST-MoFPED, Ramathan Ggoobi, who also doubles as the Chairperson EPRC Board of Directors. Other participants included the academic staff, non-teaching staff, student leadership, students and organisations working within the university.

Policy Dialogue on Leveraging Business Financing Mechanisms for Women

On March 14, 2024, EPRC, in collaboration with UN Women, held a policy dialogue on leveraging existing business financing mechanisms to accelerate women's economic empowerment in Uganda, where EPRC shared with women existing government financing products that can be leveraged to boost business. The dialogue was attended majorly by women business owners in Mukono and other areas of greater Kampala.

Dissemination of Research

Public Debt and Climate Change Sustainability Study

Supported by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) Canada, the study on Uganda's debt—focusing on stock, flow, and usage, and examining the impact of COVID-19 on institutions—was disseminated in July 2023. During the launch event, Secretary to the Treasury Ramathan Ggoobi endorsed the study as timely and emphasized, "Uganda is still among the few countries with sustainable debt, but we are not comfortable. We do not want to wait for a crisis to react." The study aimed to promote transparency,

Secretary to the Treasury, Ramathan Ggoobi, officiating at the dissemination of the public debt and climate change sustainability study by EPRC

accountability, and the inclusion of youth, women, and other marginalised groups.

Studies on Digital Financial Services in Uganda

Several studies on digital financial services in Uganda conducted under the auspices of the Africa Economic Research Consortium (AERC) were disseminated on August 13, 2023 to relevant stakeholders and policymakers. The studies were conducted by EPRC and Bank of Uganda research teams and covered five topics: (i) the effect of digital finance policy on financial inclusion, (ii) the impact of mobile money on monetary stability, (iii) the gender gap in digital financing and its socio-economic factors, (iv) the monetary economics of e-money and its policy implications, and (v) the role of digital services and market development in enhancing financial inclusion.

Panel Survey Results on Post-Pandemic MSMEs Resilience

With support from IDRC, Canada, on December 14, 2023, EPRC released the results of a panel survey on *"Mitigating Socio-Economic Impacts of COVID-19 and Promoting Post-Pandemic Resilience in Uganda"*. The study was part of the bigger three-year project under the IDRC-COVID-19: Responses for Equity (CORE) Initiative to generate timely evidence on the impact of COVID-19 on Micro, Small, and Medium-sized Enterprises (MSMEs). The dissemination was attended by the business community, government officials, and the diplomatic community. The study findings stimulated debate on how to build the resilience of small businesses in the country. Recommendations are expected to be used by the government to build strategies that support business reliance in the country in case a similar shock strikes again.

Launch of the Agricultural Financial Yearbook 2022

The EPRC, in partnership with aBi Finance, on August 24, launched the 12th edition of the Agricultural Finance Yearbook 2022. This edition focused on climate-smart finance for the agricultural sector. MoFPED Permanent Secretary and Secretary to the Treasury Ramathan Ggoobi and Bank of Uganda Deputy Governor Dr. Michael Atingi-Ego graced the book launch. Dr Atingi-Ego noted that there was renewed optimism in the economy following the resilience of the economy in 2022/23. The launch was attended by participants from different walks of life, including donor agencies, CSOs, Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs).

Sub-National Dissemination of COVID-19 Impact Studies on MSMEs

In February 2024, EPRC carried out two regional disseminations in Mbale and Fort Portal for studies on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on Micro, Small, and Medium-sized Enterprises (MSMEs) in Uganda. The interaction with enterprises in these regions was aimed at sharing research results from the survey they were party to, and to share resilience lessons that businesses could adopt in case of a similar shock.

Technical and advisory support

The centre continued to support research use and uptake in policy processes through representation in technical working committees and task forces of MDAs such as the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development (MoFPED), Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBoS) and World Bank. Our experts contributed to the development of

Mr. Paul Lakuma speaking at the annual Economic Growth Forum organised by MoFPED and the International Growth Centre

policy frameworks and guidelines, ensuring that evidence-based insights informed decision-making processes. This advisory support was instrumental in shaping effective and sustainable policies. Below is a highlight of some of these activities:

National Employment Policy and Strategy

(Focal person Dr Madina Guloba): During the review period, EPRC's role has been to incorporate the reviewers' comments from European Union (EU), African Union (AU), Government, and external International Labour Organisation (ILO) offices. This also includes the revisions in the costing of the strategy. As members of the National Employment Council, the Centre has provided guided inputs to the revised National Employment Policy 2023/24.

Strategy Implementation Group of the National Strategy for Private Sector Development (NSPSD)

(Focal person Dr Madina Guloba). The Centre attended three meetings to track the implementation of the strategy. Broadly, the committee is expected to provide strategic direction and champion the implementation of the second NSPSD.

National Monitoring and Evaluation Technical Working Group

(Focal person Madina Guloba): The group meets quarterly to review progress reports and commissioned research works on the evaluation of government programs. The Office of the Prime Minister leads the group.

National Cocoa Multi-stakeholders Platform

(Focal person Florence Nakazi) to organize all stakeholders under one umbrella to discuss and share experiences and opportunities on the challenges affecting the cocoa sub-sector.

The Census Technical Advisory Committee

(Focal person Dr Madina Guloba): The objective of the Committee was to provide technical support to the planning and implementation of the 2024 National Population and Housing Census. The committee work started in 2022. The key activities included the census tools, pilots, and monitoring and overseeing census execution.

Technical Support to MoFPED

(Focal person Paul Lakuma): on growing the economy 10-fold discussions; on infrastructure bond; tax measures focusing on VAT threshold; and high-level dialogue on resource envelope for FY2024/25.

MoFPED Top Management Meetings;

The Centre is represented by the Executive Director Dr. Sarah Ssewanyana and the meetings are held every week to approve policy proposals which have been scrutinized by the top technical committee of the Ministry. The committee comprises Ministers, Directors, PSST and Executives from other MDAs affiliated with MoFPED such as NPA and UBOS.

Demographic Dividend Think Tank under the National Population Council

(Focal person Dr Sarah Ssewanyana) The Think-Tank brings together diverse population, economics, health, and education experts to provide policy direction and strategic guidance towards achieving Uganda's Demographic Dividend Roadmap. The Road map aims at accelerating a rapid decline in fertility to change the population age structure to one conducive to development and ensure the resultant surplus labour force is well-educated, appropriately skilled, healthy, and economically engaged in reaping the Demographic Dividend.

Export-Import (EXIM) Think Tank Committee under MoFPED:

(Focal Person Isaac Shinyekwa): The multi-sectoral committee chaired by the PSST aims to support MoFPED in addressing emerging investment promotion, export development and import replacement interventions to stimulate exports and improve the balance of trade (BOT) deficit.

Hacettepe University, Ankara

(Focal Person – Paul Corti Lakuma) He has supported Dr Zafer Çelik and Dr Mehmet Köse on research Identifying the deficiencies and weaknesses of the existing Vocational Education Systems and developing suggestions on how to develop better systems by eliminating the problems encountered as a strategy

for reducing youth unemployment in Uganda

Dr Brian Sserunjogi (Focal person) contributed to the Microfinance Industry by emphasizing the importance of environmental, social, and governance (ESG) principles in microfinance in Uganda.

Dr. Isaac Shinyekwa (Focal person) supported Private Sector Foundation Uganda as a judge in the selection of winners of the PSFU Member and Association Awards for 2023.

Florence Nakazi (Focal person) provided technical support to the National Horticulture Strategy Multisectoral Task Team, offering guidance on the necessity of an issues paper to aid in developing the national horticultural strategy.

Medard Kakuru and Madina Guloba supported the technical working group in developing Uganda's Just Transition Framework (JTF) and roadmap.

Other committees include the National Population Council Committee, National Social Protection Committee, and Women's Economic Empowerment Committee.

EPRC staff attend training on digital media, facilitated by Michael Niyitegeka from Refactory.

Building Stakeholder Capacity for Evidence Uptake

Building stakeholder capacity for evidence uptake was a major focus area. We conducted numerous capacity-building workshops to enhance stakeholders' ability to utilise research for policy-making. These training sessions equipped participants with the necessary skills and knowledge to effectively integrate evidence into their decision-making processes. The major ones included :

a) Capacity Strengthening Workshop for government planners, business associations and other MSME stakeholders organized in collaboration with IDRC, focusing on how to design responses to shocks such as the COVID-19 pandemic. The workshop aimed to enhance the ability of key stakeholders, including trainers from Enterprise Uganda, MTIC, URA, MAAIF, and MoFPED, to develop effective strategies for shock response. The event took place at Speke Resort Munyonyo and a total of 37 participants attended drawn from MoFPED, MTIC, KACITA, FSME, URSB, URA, UMA, USSIA, and NPA.

b) Training on Best Practices in Policy Analysis for Parliament Researchers. The aim was to provide knowledge and skills on research methodologies, policy analysis, ethics in research and research to policy practices to the staff of the Department of Research Services, Parliament of Uganda. A total of 30 staff were trained, 17 females and 13 males.

To support the stakeholder capacity-building efforts, we also invested in enhancing the internal capacity of EPRC staff in policy outreach, communication and stakeholder engagement. These included crafting publishable newspaper opinion articles as a way of disseminating research and informing public policy debate and agenda setting, as well as the use of digital and social media platforms to enhance knowledge sharing and engagement on the centre's research products and activities published online. The first training was conducted by Daniel Kalinaki, General Manager, Editorial-Nation Media Group and the latter by Michael Niyitegeka, Executive Director Refactory, a software skilling company. Both trainings were conducted under the Feed the Future Innovation Lab for Food Security Policy Research, Capacity, and Influence (PRCI) coordinated by Michigan State University. Additionally, three EPRC researchers—Justine Luwedde, Aida Nattabi, and Rehema Kahunde obtained training in transforming research papers into effective policy briefs under the AERC/BMGF Building Policy Research Institutions to Support Human Capital Development in Africa Project.

EPRC Board of Directors during the Annual General Meeting on November 23, 2023, at EPRC offices, Makerere University

2.2 Enhanced institutional position and profile

Throughout the year under review, our commitment to fostering a collaborative partnership environment was evident through numerous events organised to facilitate knowledge sharing and policy discourse among stakeholders. A detailed listing of the events is attached as Annexe 1. The most notable research dissemination and policy engagement events are presented under the following categories:

The key objective of this performance area is to elevate EPRC's profile and effectiveness as a trusted source of high-quality, evidence-based products and services that address stakeholder needs. It also aims to strengthen the branding and marketing of EPRC's core competencies in shaping evidence-based policymaking at national, regional, and international levels. The following are some of the interventions undertaken during the period under review to achieve this objective:

Networking with think tanks and professional bodies

Over the past year, EPRC has made significant efforts to elevate its institutional profile both nationally and internationally. A key part of this effort involved networking with leading think tanks and professional bodies worldwide. The Centre strengthened and expanded its collaborations in research with institutions at the national, regional, and international levels, including universities, research organizations, and development partners. These partnerships focused on joint research, capacity building, and organizing policy dialogues and research dissemination events, some of which are highlighted below:

EPRC@30 Open Day

On February 15, 2024, as part of

its 30th-anniversary celebration of impactful policy research, EPRC, in partnership with Makerere University Hospital, organized a medical camp offering free healthcare services to the Makerere University community and surrounding areas. Over 700 individuals benefited from services such as eye treatment, dental check-ups, speech therapy, HIV and cancer screening, safe male circumcision, and blood donation.

Participation in Regional and Global Forums

The Centre enhanced its visibility and influence in the global policy and research arena through the presentation of research findings and recommendations at conferences, workshops, and technical committees among other forums, that contribute to important discussions and debates on development issues. These forums facilitated the exchange of information and best practices among think tanks, policy-oriented NGOs and development partners around the world.

Publishing in Internationally Acclaimed Publications

Publishing our research in international journals, blogs, and other platforms was another strategic intervention to increase our global reach and presence. These publications helped disseminate our research findings to a broader audience and facilitated the uptake of evidence in policy-making processes worldwide.

Digital and Online Presence

EPRC's digital presence was significantly expanded to engage with a wider audience using online platforms such as Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn. We also actively participated in online forums convened by our partners and networks, sharing our research and policy insights and engaging in discussions with stakeholders across the globe which enhanced our digital footprint and ensured that our work reached diverse audiences.

H.E Upender Singh Rawat (3rd left), Indian High Commissioner to Uganda, during a courtesy visit to EPRC.

2.3. Enhanced Access and Use of EPRC Research Knowledge

Ensuring that our research knowledge is accessible and utilised by key stakeholders is a primary focus for EPRC. During the reporting period, we undertook the following activities to realise this performance area:

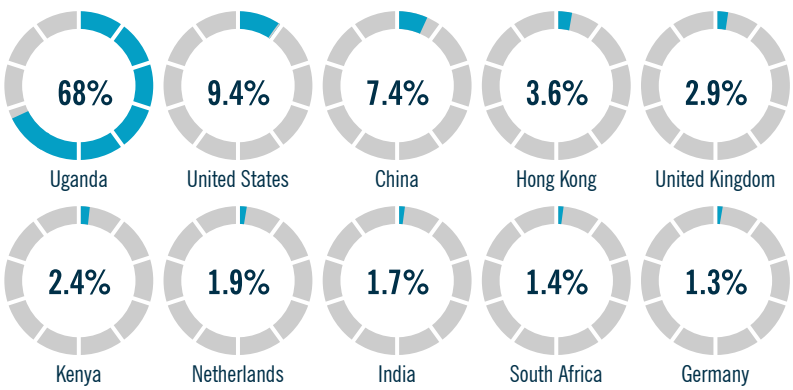
Participants at an EPRC-organised regional dissemination workshop in Fort Portal. Photo/EPRC

Website Management

Maintaining and managing our website was a critical part of this effort. We ensured that the website was regularly updated with the latest research and policy publications, providing stakeholders with easy access to relevant information and resources. A total of 133,806 publication views were registered in the period under review. This metric reflects the number of times users have accessed or opened publications on the website, suggesting that the content is being actively consumed and likely shared among users. Likewise, the total number of publication downloads stood at 245,444 in the period under review. This number indicates a high level of interest in the EPRC materials shared. The most downloaded content were policy briefs, policy notes, Agricultural Finance Year Book (2022); Occasional Papers, Uganda Economy Today; Research Reports and Journal Articles *(See Annexe 2)*

Concerning website visitors, the highest number came from Uganda, and a significant number were from around the world as demonstrated.

Website Visitors by country of origin FY2023/2024



Social Media

Our social media presence and campaigns played a vital role in raising awareness of EPRC's work and engagement with a broader audience. Through targeted social media campaigns, we effectively communicated our research findings and policy recommendations, reaching a wide range of stakeholders. We also closely monitored and analysed engagement metrics to optimise our outreach strategies.

Media Relations

In FY 2023-2024, the Centre significantly expanded its media presence, becoming a key resource for journalists seeking expert opinions on current issues. The Centre's research and publications attracted considerable media attention, resulting in over 3,000 mentions across digital and traditional media outlets in Uganda and internationally. EPRC researchers were quoted in prominent international publications such as the New York Times, The Guardian, and the Africa Report.

The Centre received 73 mentions in print media, primarily featuring references to its research or quotes from its researchers. Major coverage came from The Daily Monitor, The Observer, and The New Vision, with additional coverage from The East African and Bukedde Newspaper. EPRC staff contributed 32 opinion articles to leading newspapers, including the Daily Monitor, New Vision, and The Observer.

In early 2024, EPRC researchers also produced foresight articles offering expert insights on various economic aspects, including the general economy, tourism, e-commerce, refugees, and the census, which were published across different media outlets in Uganda.

Broadcast Media

EPRC work and experts received extensive coverage in both radio and television media. Major radio outlets included Capital Radio, Radio One, KFM, and Uganda Radio Network. On television, NTV, NBS, UBC, Smart24 TV, and Bukedde were key stations featuring the Centre's work. EPRC recorded at least 30 media appearances across both platforms, including live broadcasts of events like the launch of the Agricultural Finance Year Book 2022 and the 11th Annual Forum on Agriculture and Food Security.

Media Publicity for EPRC@30 Celebrations

The Centre's communications team organized special coverage for its 30th anniversary celebrations, with support from Makerere University's communications team, which blogged about the event. A six-page supplement in New Vision showcased EPRC work, achievements, and challenges since 1994. Interviews with current and former staff highlighted the Centre's impact on their careers and its evolution. Several partners, including UN Women, MoFPED, Makerere University, SHARK Media, and Maya Nature Resort, congratulated the Centre on its milestone.

The Observer published two pages on the Centre's celebrations—one featuring congratulatory messages and the other detailing the Centre's impact on national policy over the past three decades. Daily Monitor ran one and a half pages acknowledging the contributions of the Centre's partners throughout its 30-year journey.

Dr. Ibrahim Kasirye, Director of Research, discussed the Centre's impact and future prospects on NTV's Money Markets programme, which also featured highlights from the Centre's celebratory Gala.

Production and circulation of Research Products

The production and distribution of research products, both hard and soft copies, were crucial for disseminating our findings to key stakeholders globally. These products included policy briefs, working papers, and other important documents. We also published and distributed information products such

EPRC Publications Produced in FY 2023/24 by Category

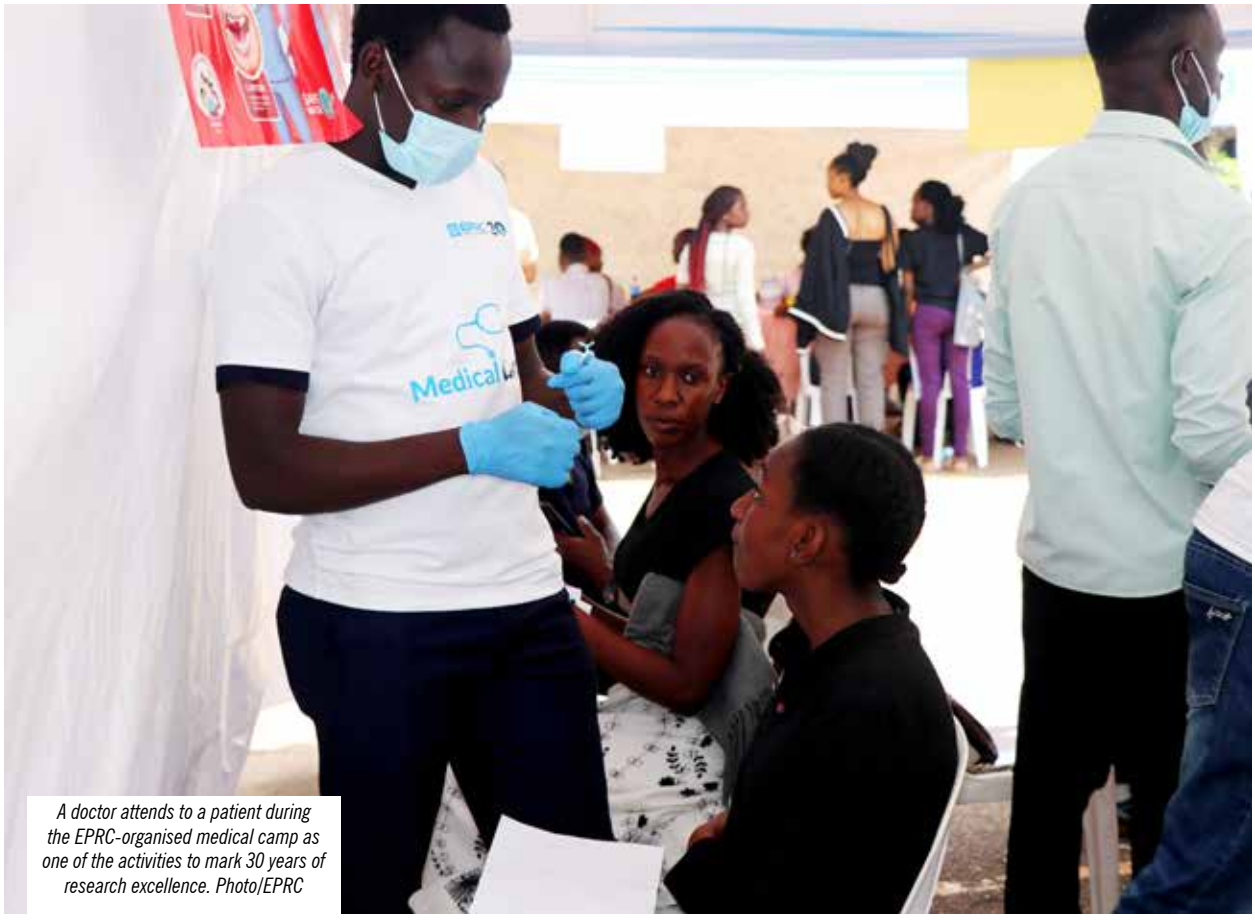
Policy Briefs	Policy Notes	Research Reports	Business Climate Index	Newspaper Articles
Internal	Internal	Internal	Internal	External
15	06	02	02	21

Journal Articles	Books	Occasional Papers	Blogs	
External	External		Internal	External
06	01	02	31	05

as the annual report and newsletters to keep stakeholders updated on our achievements and ongoing projects. These publications showcased our research activities and offered valuable insights into our work. A summary of the key EPRC publications from July 2023 to June 2024 is provided in the infographic, with a detailed listing available in Annexe 3.

Knowledge Management

The Centre strives to build and maintain an effective knowledge management system that streamlines its knowledge while making it accessible to its stakeholders. To improve the discovery, preservation, management and dissemination of research to a wider audience, in April 2024, EPRC launched a Digital Library that provides its stakeholders with a one-stop centre for EPRC publications and data sources. The goal of this digital library is to strengthen the research-to-policy linkage, by availing to both internal and external stakeholders, an open-access platform for all EPRC policy documents, publications, data and knowledge materials through an easy-to-use online access point. The EPRC publications date back to 1993, and many of these are in printed matter. The process of scanning and digitizing the historical materials commenced during the period under review and will be concluded in the next financial year. The digital library is accessible via: https://library.eprcug.org/



A doctor attends to a patient during the EPRC-organised medical camp as one of the activities to mark 30 years of research excellence. Photo/EPRC

EPRC staff members listen to Executive Director Sarah Ssewanyana during a retreat

03 Talent Management and Organizational Effectiveness

EPRC upholds a culture of productivity, efficiency, and inclusiveness through robust talent management and organisational effectiveness strategies. Our goal is to attract, develop, and retain top talent while optimising our organisational processes for maximum effectiveness. We realise this goal through three performance areas:

3.1. Effective HR Function and Processes

EPRC staff pose for a photo with the MoFPED and Board Members

Performance Management

Regular performance reviews are carried out to ensure that employees meet their objectives and contribute effectively to the organisation's goals. Comprehensive performance reviews including quarterly reviews, feedback sessions, and development plans tailored to individual needs, were conducted to ensure a motivated and engaged workforce.

Employee Productivity and Satisfaction

EPRC introduced several initiatives to boost productivity and satisfaction and significantly improve the work environment. For instance, we launched a wellness program where staff participate in aerobics exercises every Friday afternoon. This initiative aims to help employees manage work-related stress and improve mental health. Additionally, 29 ergonomic chairs were procured to reduce physical strain and enhance comfort for staff.

Institutional and Functional Analysis

We conduct periodic institutional and functional analyses to identify areas of improvement within our HR functions. This helps streamline processes, ensuring our HR practices align with our strategic objectives. For example, a recent analysis led to the implementation of a new talent management system that integrates recruitment, onboarding, performance management, and succession planning.

Reward System

Our reward system is designed to recognise and incentivize high performance while ensuring our rewards are competitive and fair. The Young Professional Programme continues to award the best M.A. Economics students. During the EPRC @30 Open Day on February 15, 2024, Mr. Jude Sebuliba was recognized for his excellent performance and awarded a two-year employment contract, highlighting our commitment to nurturing young talent.

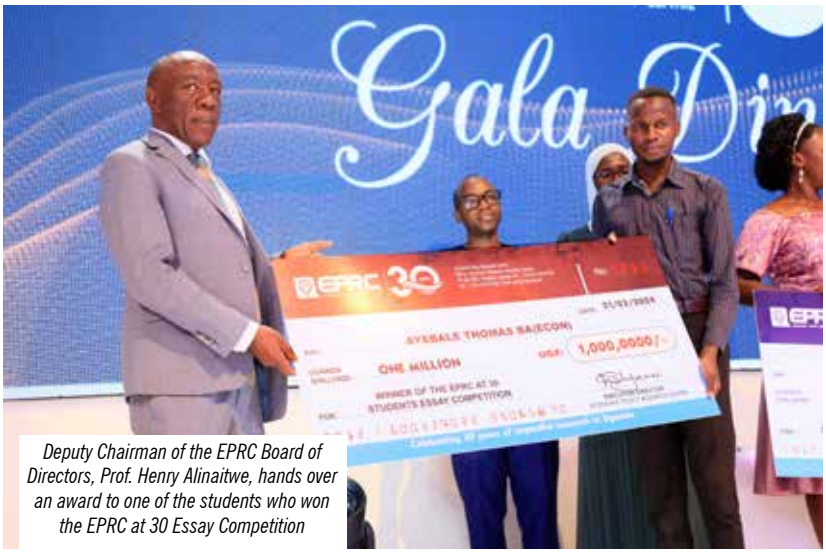
Talent Attraction and Development

EPRC successfully recruited new staff in FY2023/24, including Dr Naome Otiti, a Research Fellow under the Sectoral Department, and five volunteer

research associates, three at the PhD level (Phionah Namuliira, Amos Sanday, and Christine Alum Arwata) and two at the Master's level (Joab Wamani and Solomon Nuwagaba). Additionally, Mr. Joshua Mudde was also recruited as a Knowledge Management Associate. The Young Professional, Jude Sebuliba, the best M.A. Economics student from COBAMS, was recruited in February 2024. This diverse talent pool strengthens our research capabilities and brings fresh perspectives to the organisation.

As part of the EPRC@30 celebratory activities, a career guidance and counselling session was jointly conducted with the Makerere University Career Guidance and Counselling Centre to promote the career opportunities offered at EPRC and take students through what it takes to successfully apply for internship, job opportunities, and ways to handle rejection in case one is not successful. In addition, an essay competition was organised as part of the 30-year celebrations to allow students to demonstrate their writing talents and identify individuals with critical thinking and writing skills. The best two essays by Ayebale Thomas BA (Econ) (3rd year) and Kulubya Lenald Reagan BA (Econ) (3rd year) were awarded a prize of one million shillings and also recognised during the EPRC@30 Gala dinner.

We employ strategic talent mapping to identify and develop future leaders for the organisation, ensuring a robust leadership pipeline. This involves regular assessments of staff skills and potential, aligning individual career goals with organisational needs. Retaining top



Deputy Chairman of the EPRC Board of Directors, Prof. Henry Alinaitwe, hands over an award to one of the students who won the EPRC at 30 Essay Competition

talent is also critical to our success. To this end, Mr. Paul Lakuma was promoted to Senior Research Fellow from Research Fellow, following an internal vacancy announcement and a rigorous interview process. This promotion underscores our commitment to recognising and retaining high-performing staff and ensuring their continued growth in the organisation.

Internship, Secondment, and Mentorship

Our internship and secondment programs provide valuable learning opportunities. In FY2023/24, we recruited six interns: four postgraduate and two undergraduate interns. Additionally, two fellows from the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development (MoFPED), Mr. Muhammad Mukisa and Ms. Sandra Nakabiri, joined us on a secondment arrangement. These programs facilitate knowledge exchange, capacity building, and mentorship, preparing the next generation of researchers and policy analysts.

Professional Development

Continuous professional development is a cornerstone of our HR strategy. Through partnerships with our stakeholders, we were able to continuously equip centre staff with the latest skills and knowledge in their respective fields as follows:

- Dr. Linda Nakato, Dr. Kabanda, Umar and Pauline Nakitende attended Cornell University and Michigan State University from August 19th to September 9th 2023, in the USA, as part of the STAAARS+ fellowship program under the Feed the Future Innovation Lab for Food Security Policy Research, Capacity, and Influence (PRCI). During this period,

they received extensive training, presented their research paper, and collaborated closely with mentors to refine their work. The fellowship equipped them with additional skills in journal publication and provided valuable feedback on their working paper on pesticide use and food security. Furthermore, they built new networks through interactions with several researchers, enhancing their professional connections.

- Similarly, Florence Nakazi travelled to Sweden from September 17th to 29th, 2023, to participate in an international training program on gender statistics. During this program, she enhanced her skills in both gender statistics and the effective communication of these statistics. The knowledge she gained contributed to the development of the gender statistics manual under the UN Women Count II project.
- The young professional recruit in 2023-Hildah Namuleme attended the Africa Young Graduates (AYGs) masterclass series on the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). This series was designed to provide selected delegates with a comprehensive understanding of AfCFTA and its potential to drive inclusive growth and sustainable development in Africa, in preparation for an upcoming conference. The training was organized by the Africa Institute of South Africa and the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC).
- Courtesy of the Bureau for Research and Economic Analysis of Development (BREAD), in collaboration with the International Growth Centre (IGC) program, Medard Kakuru and Philemon Okillong received training through a Virtual Course on Environmental Economics. This course provided a comprehensive review of the economic issues relevant to climate change and environmental economics. The course enhanced their capacity to measure the impact of environmental policies and assess the associated costs on the environment.
- Medard Kakuru and Smartson Ainomugisha received training from The International Initiative for Impact Evaluation (3ie) team on 3ie's Impact Evaluation Methodology Training of Trainers (TOT). This program was designed to equip participants with the necessary skills and knowledge to conduct scientific research using modern impact evaluation techniques. The training was sponsored by Makerere University School of Public Health.
- Florence Nakazi participated in a training program on integrating gender into research and development projects, aimed to equip researchers with the skills necessary to conduct situation and gender analyses for strategy and project design, as well as selecting indicators for monitoring and evaluation. This training was offered under the PRCI technical training program for Africa.

Regular training sessions and mentorship programs were also conducted to enhance staff capabilities. These capacity-building efforts were guided by a detailed annual capacity development plan, encompassing various technical and soft skills training for staff at all levels. This year's notable training sessions featured Stata training for researchers and select technical staff to enhance their analytical abilities, along with advanced Excel and presentation skills training.

Additionally, a team of seven staff benefitted from the regulatory impact assessment training as part of the development of the RIA for the sugarcane sub-sector in Uganda.

Other training opportunities offered to staff included navigating the peer review system for research analysts, fundamentals of cyber security, common myths, personal cyber-attack surfaces, device theft, risks associated with free virtual private networks, personal actions to reduce attack surfaces, and specific cybersecurity actions recommended for EPRC. These initiatives have ensured that our staff are well-prepared to tackle current and future challenges.

Our finance staff --Betty Kuteesa, Denis Arop Nono, and Mary Tusaba Kivunike participated in a refresher training session on taxation for public sector entities organized by the Uganda Revenue Authority (URA). This training aimed to update participants on the various tax types affecting public sector entities and provide guidance on navigating the new URA portal.

3.3. Improved Organisational Effectiveness

Betty Kuteesa, EPRC Senior Accountant, addresses staff on risk and audit matters during the retreat.

To improve organisational effectiveness, we have automated many of our management processes using Microsoft 365, which offers flexibility in work arrangements. The acquisition of advanced research writing, editing, and plagiarism tools, supported by our generous donors, has significantly enhanced our research capabilities. For example, the introduction of Microsoft 365 has streamlined project collaboration, document sharing, and real-time communication among staff, increasing overall efficiency.

Regular policy reviews and the development of new policies ensure that our organisational framework is up-to-date and aligned with best practices. This ongoing process helps maintain a responsive and adaptable organisational structure, allowing us to meet evolving challenges effectively.

3.4. Conducive and Secure Work Environment

EPRC is committed to providing a safe and healthy work environment. We are registered with the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (MoGLSD) for occupational safety and health workplace registration, ensuring compliance with Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) regulations. This registration underscores our commitment to maintaining high safety standards and protecting our staff's well-being.

Assessments conducted by various organisations, including ENABEL, provide valuable insights into our operational strengths and areas for improvement. These assessments help us maintain high standards of organisational effectiveness and continuously improve our processes and practices.

We offer comprehensive insurance services to our staff, ensuring they have access to necessary healthcare and protection against unforeseen events. The Centre has also insured its assets, including the EPRC Building and motor vehicles, providing financial security and peace of mind.

EPRC also recognises the importance of work-life balance and offers flexible working arrangements to accommodate the diverse needs of our staff. This includes remote working options and flexible hours, enabling employees to manage their personal and professional commitments effectively.

Workspace and Environment

We continually strive to create a workspace conducive to productivity and innovation. For example, the procurement of a hybrid power backup solution and a 45KVA automatic voltage stabiliser has significantly improved our work environment by ensuring a stable power supply, thereby minimising disruptions and maintaining optimal working conditions.

To ensure the security of our premises, equipment, and systems, we have implemented robust security measures including surveillance systems and access controls to protect our physical and digital assets, safeguarding our operational integrity.

Through these comprehensive initiatives, EPRC is committed to fostering an environment where talent can thrive, and the organisation can achieve its strategic objectives with efficiency and effectiveness. Our continuous focus on talent management and organisational effectiveness ensures that we remain at the forefront of research and policy analysis, driving positive change and development.

EPRC Board of Directors in session during the 10TH Annual General Meeting on November 23, 2023. The MoFPED Hon Matia Kasaija attended the meeting.

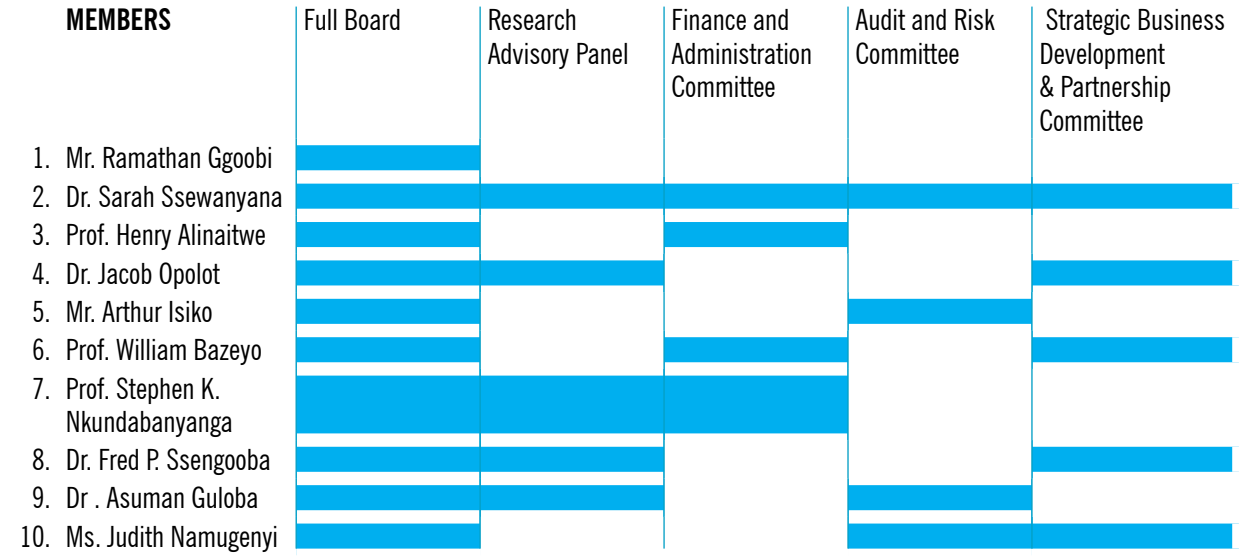
04 Governance, Risk and Control

The Economic Policy Research Centre (EPRC) upholds exemplary corporate governance practices to ensure optimal organizational performance. From its inception, it was recognized that for EPRC to effectively contribute to policy formulation within the Ugandan government, it needed to maintain operational independence and establish a robust governance framework. This strong foundation has enabled the Centre to efficiently and effectively fulfil its mandate. The leadership and strategic direction provided by the Board of Directors have been instrumental in safeguarding the Centre's financial resources and monitoring organisational performance through the following performance areas:

5.1 Best Practices for Non-Profit Governance

During the year under review, the Centre had a fully constituted Board that adhered to best practices in corporate governance- the structure and system of rules, practices, and processes by which the Centre is directed, controlled, and held accountable. The Centre complied with all statutory requirements while balancing the interests of both internal and external stakeholders. The members of the Board who served during the year, along with the committees they were part of, are shown in the accompanying Table/Infographic.

Composition of Full Board and Board Committees



The Board effectively fulfilled its oversight role by ensuring that the Centre's five-year strategic plan was implemented through annual work plans, which were monitored quarterly by the respective Board committees. These committees were established with clear terms of reference to facilitate efficient and effective decision-making in carrying out the Board's duties, powers, and responsibilities. Both the Board and its committees are required to meet at least quarterly, or as needed. The following meetings were held during the year to ensure adherence to best governance practices:

5.1.1. Board Committee Meetings

S/NO	Description	No. meetings held
1.	Full Board	2
2.	Finance and Administration Committee (FAC)	3
3.	Research Advisory Panel (RAP)	2
4.	Audit and Risk Management Committee (ARMC)	2
5.	Strategic Business Development & Partnerships Committee (SBDP)	2

5.2. Effective Risk Management

Risk management is an integral part of EPRC's decision-making and daily operations. It is embedded in the Centre's strategic plan for FY 2022/23–FY 2026/27 and reflected in the individual job descriptions of all staff members. During the period under review, continuous quarterly risk assessments were conducted for new research, projects, processes, and systems to ensure alignment with the Centre's objectives and goals. These risks were profiled and compiled into a risk register, which was reviewed and monitored quarterly to ensure the effectiveness of the risk management process and foster a strong risk management culture among staff.

Risks identified during these assessments were analyzed and reported to the Senior Management Team (SMT), the Risk and Quality Assurance Committee, and the entire Board of Directors. Additionally, sensitization sessions on risk management were held during the staff retreat, departmental meetings, and on an individual basis.

5.3. Compliance with Policies and Regulations

During the period no new policies were developed or amended. However to ensure compliance with the existing policies staff were sensitised through general staff meetings, departmental meetings, emails and on an individual basis. A compliance register was regularly updated to monitor and report on compliance with policies, procedures, and the Centre's guidelines.

5.4. Strengthened ICT Infrastructure, Systems, Services and Security

The Centre recognises the importance of ICT in fulfilling its established mandate and aligning ICT with its objectives and ambitions as articulated in its five-year strategic plan. This performance area therefore focuses on providing the centre with a secure ICT environment which is effective and has the flexibility required to support EPRC staff and stakeholders to effectively and efficiently carry out their day-to-day business operations consonant with the centre's strategic plans and objectives. This is realised through the following activities:

Performance and Management of ICT

The past year has seen significant enhancements in the performance and management of EPRC's ICT systems, thanks to the support from PRCI and IDRC. These contributions have been instrumental in the acquisition of advanced ICT infrastructure, including a state-of-the-art hybrid inverter system that combines solar, hydro, and battery power with a generator backup. This system ensures an uninterrupted power supply, especially critical for sensitive equipment in our server room. Additionally, we have procured advanced conferencing and communication tools and equipment to facilitate seamless virtual meetings and webinars. Another key achievement is the establishment of a digital library infrastructure, which serves as a central repository for our research outputs, enabling easy access and information sharing among stakeholders.

We are currently implementing a comprehensive File Server Backup system to safeguard our data. The acquisition of Manage Engine during the reporting period allows for live server systems monitoring, providing real-time insights into system performance and health.

To further enhance our ICT resilience, we have acquired a hybrid inverter system, coupled with a generator, to mitigate power outages and ensure continuous operation of our server room's sensitive equipment. We have also registered with the Personal Data Protection Office, underscoring our commitment to data privacy and protection.

We also maintained Service Level Agreements (SLAs) with key partners such as Sybyl for servers and workstations, MFI for printers, Mantra/UTL for telephony, and Baseline Ltd for power support. These partnerships ensured Level 3 support and maintenance, contributing to our infrastructure's impressive uptime of approximately 99.5%.

Sensitization on ICT

EPRC places a strong emphasis on staff sensitization and training in ICT, recognizing the importance of cybersecurity in today's digital landscape. Over the past year, we have conducted comprehensive cybersecurity sensitisation sessions for our staff to enhance their awareness and skills in protecting sensitive information and mitigating cyber threats. These training programs are critical in ensuring that all employees are equipped with the knowledge to maintain the integrity and security of our ICT systems.

ICT Acquisitions

The centre has made several significant ICT acquisitions aimed at improving operational efficiency and capacity. Notably, we have acquired state-of-the-art server and storage solutions, ensuring robust data management and security. Our secure website, complete with domain, SSL, and hosting, provides a reliable online presence for our stakeholders. The development of a digital library has further enhanced our ability to share and collaborate on research information.

To support day-to-day operations, we have upgraded our workstations with new computers, including the addition of eight (8) new computers and one (1) laptop. These acquisitions have streamlined the processing, sharing, and collaboration of information. We continue to subscribe to essential software and services, such as Stata for statistical analysis, MS Office 365 for productivity, Google services for email and offsite backup of shared documents and finance data, and Zoom for virtual meetings and webinars.

ICT Governance

EPRC is committed to maintaining robust ICT governance frameworks to ensure the resilience and security of our systems. Our ICT Disaster Recovery Plan (DRP) and Business Continuity Plan (BCP) were approved by the Board of Directors during the reporting period. This approval follows a thorough annual ICT internal audit, ensuring that our governance practices are aligned with best practices and regulatory requirements. These measures collectively have continuously strengthened our ICT infrastructure, systems, services, and security, positioning EPRC to effectively support its mission of evidence-informed policy development.

Elizabeth Birabwa, EPRC Programs Manager, orienting staff on some of the Centre's policies during a recent retreat.

EPRC Executive Director Sarah Ssewanyana (C), Director of Finance and Shared Services Mary Kivunike, and Director of Research Ibrahim Kasirye appearing before the Parliament Committee on Budget

05 Self-sustaining Centre

Under this pillar the centre focuses on securing resources to support the generation of quality and impactful evidence, its dissemination and uptake for sustainable economic growth and development of Uganda and beyond.

4.1. Resources Mobilisation strengthened

Finance Minister Hon. Matia Kasaija is welcomed to EPRC by Executive Director Dr. Sarah Ssewanyana and Vice-Chairperson of the Board of Directors, Prof. Henry Alinaitwe

While securing all the necessary funds to fully support the Centre has been challenging, the FY 2023/24 showed promising progress, with many of the funding gaps from the previous year being addressed. The Government of Uganda demonstrated remarkable generosity by recognizing the vital role of research in policy processes, doubling the Centre's grant from UGX 4 billion to UGX 8.425 billion. This significant increase enhanced domestic resource support and notably reduced the Centre's dependence on isolated and unreliable restricted research projects.

Restricted funding from international agencies also enabled the Centre to expand its initiatives. During the year, the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) supported three key projects: the IDRC-COVID-19: Responses for Equity (CORE) Initiative, the Public Debt Sustainability Study, and the GrOW Unpaid Care Work project. The first two projects officially concluded during the review period, while the GrOW project is set to close in August 2024 after a six-month extension.

In addition, various UN agencies—including UN Women, UNICEF, and FAO—provided support, as did the Africa Economic Research Consortium (AERC), African Population and Health Research Center (APHRC), and the Belgian Development Agency ENABLE. These partnerships facilitated joint study dissemination and independent project work. The MoFPED's Public Sector Development Unit (PSDU) also contributed to the Centre's efforts.

4.2. Resources Management

PSST Ramathan Ggoobi launches the Agricultural Finance Yearbook 2022 at Protea Hotel in Kampala

The EPRC aims to efficiently and effectively plan and transparently allocate secured resources, aligning with the organization's goals and the aspirations of the country. The Centre is audited by both internal auditors and external auditors approved by the Auditor General of Uganda. It has consistently received an unqualified opinion from auditors, which is a testament to its commitment to effective resource allocation.

06 Financial Statement 2023/2024

The Centre's financial health was significantly bolstered by increased core funding and strategic partnerships, allowing it to meet most of its operational and research needs. We present the financial standing below:

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 30TH JUNE 2024

ASSETS	Notes	2024 Ushs'000	2023 Ushs'000
Non Current assets			
Property, Plant & Equipment	2(a)	1,583,219	1,515,855
Intangible assets	2(b)	47,633	3,921
		1,630,852	1,519,776
Current Assets			
Receivables	3	289,251	394,761
Investments	4	6,084,407	5,099,243
Cash & Cash Equivalent	5	3,983,591	3,546,956
		10,357,249	9,040,960
TOTAL ASSETS		**11,988,101**	**10,560,736**
EQUITY AND LIABILITIES			
Equity			
Share Holders Funds	6	1,845,561	1,874,339
Strategic Reserve	7	7,065,107	6,080,256
		8,910,668	7,954,595
Liabilities			
Deferred Revenue Grants	8	1,894,618	1,753,890
Capital Grant	9	4,943	5,491
Payables	10	1,177,872	846,760
		3,077,433	2,606,141
TOTAL EQUITY AND LIABILITIES		**11,988,101**	**10,560,736**

The financial statements on pages 7 to 17 were approved by the Board of Directors on 27th August 2024 and were signed on its behalf by:

BOARD CHAIRPERSON

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dr. Swaibu Mbowa, Senior Research Fellow at EPRC, addressing the media on the sidelines of the national stakeholder workshop on sugarcane

07 Annexes

This section provides extra information on the policy engagement and communication events, knowledge products produced in the period under review and their performance on the website and

Annexe 1: Policy Engagement and Communication Events Convened by EPRC in FY2023/224

	Event Title	Venue	Date
Policy/Public Dialogues			
1.	Launch of the 2022 Agricultural Finance Yearbook themed "Towards Climate Responsive Agricultural Finance in Uganda".	Protea Hotel Kampala	August 23, 2023
2.	11th National Forum on Agriculture and Food Security	Sheraton Kampala Hotel	September 26, 2023
3.	Post-budget dialogue on assessment of the FY 2023/24 Agro-industrialisation budget towards the provision of agricultural extension in Uganda	Kampala Serena Hotel	July 13, 2023
4.	Talk about how think tanks and Academia can work collaboratively, to influence evidence-based public policy as part of the EPRC @30 open day	Yusuf Lule Central Teaching Facility (CTF-2), Makerere University	February 15, 2024,
5.	Positioning Think Tanks to Support the African Union Agenda at the G20, as part of EPRC@30 celebrations.	Virtual	February 29, 2024
6.	EPRC@30 Gala Dinner to crown the celebrations of three decades	Kampala Serena Hotel	March 21, 2024
Dissemination Forums			
1.	Leveraging existing business financing mechanisms to accelerate women's economic empowerment in Uganda	Ridar Hotel Seeta	March 14, 2024
2.	In-country dissemination workshop of the findings of AERC-commissioned studies for the 'Delivering Digital Financial Services for the Poor in the East African Community (DFSP-EAC) project.	Sheraton Kampala Hotel	August 17, 2023
Corporate Social Responsibility			
1.	EPRC@30 Open Day included a career guidance session and a medical camp.	CoBAMS and EPRC Parking LOT	February 15-16, 2024

Annexe 2: Top 10 Downloads in FY 2023/24

	Publication	Downloads
1.	Agricultural Finance Yearbook 2022: Towards Climate Agricultural Finance in Uganda	9,222
2.	How can renewable energy development trigger violent conflict in Uganda? Linda Nakato (November 22, 2023).	5222
3.	Lack of information is affecting business operations under the Africa Continental Free Trade Area. Ambrose Ogwang, Rehema Kahunde and Brian Sserunjogi (July, 2023).	3843
4.	Assessment of the FY 2023/24 agro-industrialisation programme budget towards the provision of agricultural extension in Uganda. *Brian Sserunjogi, Florence Nakazi, Rehema Kahunde and Sheila Nakkazi Christine* (July 12, 2023).	3820
5.	What does the low uptake of the Small Business Recovery Fund mean for women enterprises in Uganda? *Phionah Namuliira* (March 13, 2024).	2855

	Publication	Downloads
6	Sustainable, inclusive, and environmentally responsive debt in Uganda: Implication of COVID-19. Corti Paul Lakuma, Brian Sserunjogi, Rehema Kahunde, Ambrose Ogwang, Smartson Ainomugisha	383
7	How does conflict affect the trade prospects of Somalia joining the EAC? *Aida Kibirige Nattabi, Justine Luwedde, Philemon Okillong and Hildah Namuleme*	382
8	How to speed up the adoption of e-commerce by MSMEs in Uganda. Smartson Ainomugisha (October 21, 2023)	232
9	"Does institutional quality matter for primary school retentions: Lessons from Uganda" Regean Mugume	228
10	Ainomugisha, S, R. Mugume, L. Nakato, S.N. Ssewanyana, M. Guloba, I. Kasirye, S. Mbowa, J. Kiiza and P. Musiimenta (2024), Dynamics of the COVID-19 pandemic effect on MSMEs in Uganda: 2019 - 2022, Research Report #32. (March 2024)	200

Annexe 3 Knowledge Research Products Produced in FY2023/24

Journal Publications

1. Mugume, R. and E.N.W. Bulime (2024) **"Does institutional quality matter for primary school retentions: Lessons from Uganda"** *International Journal of Educational Development* Vol 104, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2023.102940

2. Ocen R. and P. Lakuma (2023) "COVID-19: **How Did Tax Policy Responses Affect Uganda's Economy?** *Tanzanian Economic Review*, 13(2): 100-120.

3. Mugume, R. and E.N.W. Bulime (2024). **Delivering double wins: How can Africa's finance deliver economic growth and renewable energy transition?** *Renewable Energy*, Vol. 224, 120165. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.renene.2024.120165

4. Nakato, L. (2024). **Including Men in a Female Financial Model: An Analysis of Informal Grassroots Financial Associations.** *The European Journal of Development Research*, 36(1), 25-52.

5. Nakazi, F., Nasirumbi, S., and J. Mugisha (2023). **The effect of COVID-19 containment measures on fresh food market vendors in Uganda.** *Journal of Agribusiness in Developing and Emerging Economies* (JADEE). DOI 10.1108/JADEE-10-2022-0228

6. Erem, E. (2024). **The Transmission Mechanism of the European Central Bank Unconventional Monetary Policy:** A Global Assessment. *International Journal of Economics and Finance, 16(3):1-50.*

EPRC Research Reports

1. Ainomugisha, S, R. Mugume, L. Nakato, S.N. Ssewanyana, M. Guloba, I. Kasirye, S. Mbowa, J. Kiiza and P. Musiimenta (2024), **Dynamics of the COVID-19 pandemic effect on MSMEs in Uganda:** 2019 - 2022, Research Report #32. (March 2024)

2. Guloba M, B. Atwine and T. Odonkonyero, T. Akurut (2023): **Benchmarking Policies for creating healthy food environments to prevent diet-related non-communicable diseases in Uganda** (July 2023)

EPRC Occasional Papers

3. Guloba M, B. Atwine and P. Nakitende, Economic

Burden of Type-2 Diabetes in Uganda: **A Cost of Illness Analysis** (October 24, 2023), Occasional paper #55.

Working Papers (externally published)

1. Nakato, L. , Kabanda U. , P. Nakitende, P., Lallemant, T., and Muyanga, M. (2024), **Effect of Pesticide Use on Crop Production and Food Security in Uganda.** Published on the MSU website at https://www.canr.msu.edu/resources/effect-of-pesticide-use-on-crop-production-and-food-security-in-uganda (March 31, 2024).

2. Lakuma, C.P. and R. Kahunde (2023) **"Global minimum corporate income tax: Challenges and prospects for Uganda"** *UNU WIDER Working Paper* 2023/137. https://www.wider.unu.edu/publication/global-minimum-corporate-income-tax

Policy Notes

1. PN 16: Public Funding for Agricultural extension services in Uganda: **Potential sources for budget reallocation for the Financial Year 2023/24.** Brian Sserunjogi, Florence Nakazi, Sheila Nakkazi Christine and Rehema Kahunde (October 13, 2023). Accessed via: https://eprcug.org/publication/public-funding-for-agricultural-extension-services-in-uganda-potential-sources-for-budget-reallocation-for-the-financial-year-2023-24/

2. PN No. 23: **The implications of lack of gender statistics on Uganda's National Development Plan IV and 2030 agenda.** *Florence Nakazi and Solomon Nuwagaba* (May 31, 2024). Accessed via: The implications of lack of gender statistics on Uganda's National Development Plan IV and 2030 agenda – Economic Policy Research Centre (eprcug.org)

3. PN 17: **Outstanding challenges to small-scale informal cross-border trade in Uganda.** *Brian Sserunjogi, Isaac Shinyekwa, Rehema Kahunde, Philemon Okillong and Hildah Namuleme* (October 6, 2023). Accessed via: https://eprcug.org/publication/outstanding-challenges-to-small-scale-informal-cross-border-trade-in-uganda/

4. PN 19: **How does conflict affect the trade prospects of Somalia joining the EAC?** *Aida Kibirige Nattabi, Justine Luwedde, Philemon Okillong and Hildah Namuleme* (September 3, 2023). Accessed via: https://eprcug.org/publication/how-does-conflict-affect-the-trade-prospects-of-somalia-joining-the-eac/

5. PN 22: **How to halt the declining labour force participation rates among female Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) in Uganda.** *Phionah Namulira* (October 23, 2023). Accessed via: https://eprcug.org/publication/how-to-halt-the-declining-labour-force-participation-rates-among-female-persons-with-disabilities-pwds-in-uganda/

Policy Briefs

1. Brief 161: **Assessment of the FY 2023/24 agro-industrialisation programme budget towards the provision of agricultura l extension in Uganda.** *Brian Sserunjogi, Florence Nakazi, Rehema Kahunde and Sheila Nakkazi Christine* (July 12, 2023). Accessed via: https://eprcug.org/publication/assessment-of-the-fy-2023-24-agro-industrialisation-programme-budget-towards-provision-of-agricultural-extension-in-uganda/

2. Brief 162: **Addressing violence against women during elections in Uganda.** *Florence Nakazi* (March 13, 2024). Accessed via: https://eprcug.org/publication/addressing-violence-against-women-during-elections-in-uganda/

3. Brief 163: **Is the adoption of front-of-pack labelling for food products legally and politically feasible for Uganda?** *Blessing Atwine, Mary Kajumba Muhuruzi and Madina Guloba* (October 16, 2023). Accessed via: https://eprcug.org/publication/is-the-adoption-of-front-of-pack-labelling-for-food-products-legally-and-politically-feasible-for-uganda/

4. Brief 164: **Is restricting child-directed marketing of unhealthy foods and drinks in Uganda feasible?** *Mary Kajumba Muhuruzi, Blessing Atwine and Madina Guloba* (October 17, 2023). Accessed via: https://eprcug.org/publication/is-restricting-child-directed-marketing-of-unhealthy-foods-and-drinks-in-uganda-feasible/
5. Brief 165: **Uganda's priority actions for creating a healthy food environment:** An expert panel prioritization. *Madina Guloba and Blessing Atwine* (October 24, 2023). Accessed via: https://eprcug.org/publication/ugandas-priority-actions-for-creating-a-healthy-food-environment-an-expert-panel-prioritisation/
6. Brief 166: **How to speed up the adoption of e-commerce by MSMEs in Uganda.** *Smartson Ainomugisha (*October 21, 2023). Accessed via: https://eprcug.org/publication/how-to-speed-up-the-adoption-of-e-commerce-by-msmes-in-uganda/
7. Brief 167: **Diabetes costs the Ugandan Government and households Ugx 2.2 trillion annually.** *Madina Guloba, Blessing Atwine and Pauline Nakitende* (October 16, 2023). Accessed via: https://eprcug.org/publication/diabetes-costs-the-ugandan-government-and-households-ugx-2-2-trillion-annually/
8. Brief 168: **How can renewable energy development trigger violent conflict in Uganda?** *Linda Nakato* (November 22, 2023). Accessed via: https://eprcug.org/publication/how-can-renewable-energy-development-trigger-violent-conflict-in-uganda/
9. Brief 173: **The gendered effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on micro, small and medium enterprises in Uganda:** Smartson Ainomugisha (March 13, 2024). Accessed via: https://eprcug.org/publication/the-gendered-effects-of-the-covid-19-pandemic-on-micro-small-and-medium-enterprises-in-uganda/
10. Brief 174: **What does the low uptake of the Small Business Recovery Fund mean for women enterprises in Uganda?** *Phionah Namuliira* (March 13, 2024). Accessed via: https://eprcug.org/publication/what-does-the-low-uptake-of-the-small-business-recovery-fund-mean-for-women-enterprises-in-uganda/#:~:text=However%2C%20the%20fund%20has%20experienced,for%20business%20recovery%20and%20growth.
11. Brief 175: **Why informal sector enterprises in Uganda do not want to register:** *Emmanuel Erem and Brian Sserunjogi* (May 31, 2024). Accessed via: https://eprcug.org/publication/why-informal-sector-enterprises-in-uganda-do-not-want-to-register/
12. Brief 176: **Using informal networks and other duty bearers to protect survivors of Intimate Partner Violence in Uganda:** *Florence Nakazi* (September 30, 2023). Accessed via: https://eprcug.org/publication/using-informal-networks-and-other-duty-bearers-to-protect-survivors-of-intimate-partner-violence-in-uganda/
13. Brief 177: **How the limited access to services for victims of Gender Based: Violence affects Uganda's gender SDG targets:** *Florence Nakazi* (October 12, 2023). Accessed via: How the limited access to services for victims of Gender Based Violence affects Uganda's gender SDG targets – Economic Policy Research Centre (eprcug.org)
14. MSU Policy Brief 12: **Does Pesticide Use Influence Crop Productivity in Uganda?** *Linda Nakato, Umar Kabanda, Pauline Nakitende, Tess Lallemant & Milu Muyanga* (March 31, 2024). Accessed at https://www.canr.msu.edu/resources/does-pesticide-use-influence-crop-productivity-in-uganda

Business Climate Index

1. BCI Issue No 43: **Lack of information is affecting business operations under the Africa Continental Free Trade Area.** *Ambrose Ogwang, Rehema Kahunde and Brian Sserunjogi* (July 28, 2023). Accessed via: https://eprcug.org/publication/lack-of-information-is-affecting-business-operations-under-the-africa-continental-free-trade-area/

2. BCI Issue No. 44: **The business environment significantly deteriorated as unrest erupted in Kenya** [Joab Wamani, Emmanuel Erem, Paul Lakuma], *Still undergoing final review*

Blogs Published Externally

1. Florence Nakazi (August 28, 2023). Targeted fertilizer subsidy could unlock Uganda's tea productivity Accessed via https://eprcug.org/blog/targeted-fertilizer-subsidy-could-unlock-ugandas-tea-productivity/

2. Pauline Nakitende (December 13, 2023). Why women need better access to climate finance Accessed via: https://globaldev.blog/why-women-need-better-access-to-climate-finance/

3. Florence Nakazi (May 20, 2024). Tackling regional inequalities that impede equitable food and nutrition security in Uganda. Accessed via https://www.anh-academy.org/community/blogs/tackling-regional-inequalities-that-impede-equitable-food-and-nutrition-security-in

4. Amos Sanday (February 12, 2024) .Uganda's Public Debt Dilemma: What Lies Ahead in 2024. Accessed via: https://blog-pfm.imf.org/en/pfmblog/2024/02/uganda-public-debt-dilemma-what-lies-ahead-in-2024

Blogs Published Internally

1. Hildah Namuleme (July 4, 2023). Youth unemployment: the case for vocational training Accessed via: https://eprcug.org/blog/youth-unemployment-the-case-for-vocational-training/

2. Emmanuel Erem (July 20th, 2023) Artificial Intelligence and its role in economic developmentAccessed via: https://eprcug.org/blog/artificial-intelligence-and-its-role-in-economic-development/

3. Amos Sanday (August 23, 2023). Unlocking the potential of informal sector in Uganda through business formalisation. Accessed via: https://eprcug.org/blog/unlocking-the-potential-of-the-informal-sector-in-uganda-through-business-formalisation/

4. Philemon Okillong and Rehema Kahunde (August 29, 2023). How Informal Cross-Border Traders Can Make Use of the Simplified Trade Regime Policy. Accessed via: https://eprcug.org/blog/how-informal-cross-border-traders-can-make-use-of-the-simplified-trade-regime-policy/

5. Florence Nakazi (August 28, 2023) Targeted fertilizer subsidy could unlock Uganda's tea productivity. Accessed via: https://eprcug.org/blog/targeted-fertilizer-subsidy-could-unlock-ugandas-tea-productivity/

6. Hildah Namuleme, Sheila Nakkazi Christine and Philemon Okillong (August 29, 2023). Could stronger institutions attract more Foreign Direct Investment to Uganda? Accessed via: https://eprcug.org/blog/could-stronger-institutions-attract-more-foreign-direct-investment-to-uganda/

7. Blessing Atwine (September 06, 2023) Empower Ugandans to combat the growing Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs). Accessed via: https://eprcug.org/blog/empower-ugandans-to-combat-the-growing-non-communicable-diseases-ncds-crisis/

8. Christine Arwata Alum (September 24, 2023) Could agroecological entrepreneurship lead towards sustainable food systems? Accessed via: https://eprcug.org/blog/could-agroecological-entrepreneurship-lead-towards-sustainable-food-systems/

9. Emmanuel Erem (October 4, 2023) Education for all; how about quality? Accessed via:

10. Sheila Christine Nakkazi (October 26, 2023) Mental health crisis costing us dearly. Accessed via: https://eprcug.org/blog/mental-health-crisis-costing-us-dearly/

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UN Women Uganda Country Representative Paulina Chiwangu receives documents from EPRC Executive Director Sarah Ssewanyana. Ms. Chiwangu had paid a courtesy call on EPRC.

Long-serving staff recognised for their loyalty and dedicated service to the Centre during the EPRC @30 celebrations. Prof. William Bazeyo (Far Left) presented the awards on behalf of the EPRC Board of Directors

EPRC ECONOMIC POLICY RESEARCH CENTRE 30 YEARS ANNIVERSARY

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